DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 209 758 EA 014 216

AUTHOR Ogletree, Earl J.; And Others
TITLE Race and Residence Influence Opinions of City Residency Ruling.
PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 7p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Attitudes; Board of Education Policy; Civil Liberties; Elementary Secondary Education; *Employment Qualifications; Race; Residence Requirements; Sex; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Chicago Public Schools IL

ABSTRACT

A Chicago (Illinois) Board of Education rule effective September 1, 1980, requires that all employees, except those then living in the suburbs, must reside within the city limits of Chicago. The authors surveyed 788 teachers and administrators in the Chicago school system to determine their reactions to the ruling. While controlling for race, sex, residence, occupation, and other variables, they sought respondents' attitudes on their willingness to change residence, the rights of individuals and of the city, their own schools' quality, and the likely effects of the board's ruling on integration, school-community relations, quality of city and school life, and school system funding. The findings indicate that most educators opposed the residency requirement but that opinions varied by race and residence; that most respondents believed the board's policy would not improve the schools; and that most felt the ruling violated their individual rights. Respondents were undecided, however, about whether they would move or quit because of the residency requirement. (Author/RW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E.J. Ogletree

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED209758

EA 014 216

RACE AND RESIDENCE INFLUENCE OPINIONS OF CITY RESIDENCY RULING

Earl J. Ogletree

Stanley Starkman & Marie Dora

In the early 1900's teachers were expected to live in the communities in which they taught. Today large metropolitan school districts such as Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, Lansing, Michigan and recently Chicago have teacher residency policies. These and other residency requirements have been upheld by the courts based on the "rational interest" test. The courts have stated "If it can be shown that there are a set of facts which support the states interest and purpose the residency statue will be upheld." Although Illinois prohibits residency requirements for public employees, Chicago is exempt.

The rationale for city residency includes: 1) It keeps revenue in the city, 2) public employees will support tax levies and bond issuues, 3) keeps middle class families in the city, 4) promotes greater involvement in and understanding of the community and the life style of city residents by public employees. City officials see the residency requirement as a vehicle to stem white and middle class flight and to improve the cultural and economic status of decaying metropolitan areas.

However Board of Education employees view residency as a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, prohibiting freedom of movement. The Chicago Board of Education employees hired after September 1, 1980, must reside in the city, as must those who already live in the city. Current employees who live in the suburbs could remain there. The Boards policy created two types of employees--suburbanites who are free to move where they wish and city residents who may not move out of the city if they wish to keep their job. The Chicago Teachers Union has challenged the ruling; litigation is pending.

Since the residency ruling effects the public employees, it follows they should have had some input into its creation. Its full implementation rests on the cooperation of the Board employees. Morale and resident falsification are real issues. To determine employees opinions of the residency requirement, 188 teachers and administrators were surveyed. The sample included: 71% teachers, 23% administrators and 6% other employees; 25% male, 75% female; 50% had school age children; 59% lived in the city, 41% suburbans; and 45% were white, 50% black and 5% latino. Eighty-five percent of the sample had worked for the Board for 6 or more years.

The findings in Table I show the majority (54%) of Board employees rejected city residency. However, residency and race were influential factors. Fifty-seven percent of city residents favored it, but 84% of suburbanites rejected it. Similarly 67% of whites and 60% of latino rejected and 52% of blacks favored the policy. Also 60% of the 16-25 year employees accepted city residency. But when asked whether all Board of Education employees should be forced to reside in the city, 65% (including all portions of the sample) rejected it out of hand.

Apparently the exclusionary clause for suburbanites influenced the re-

sponses to the less restringent question one. This is supported by the fact 57% of the total sample disagreed with the September 1, 1980 city residency deadline for new Board employees. Also 53% favored the exemption for subruban employees. However, those living in the city were divided on the issue as were blacks.

The sample felt the residency requirement would not fulfil the hopes of city officials. The majority (53%) believed city residency would not reduce white flight. Only school administrators were divided on the issue. On the question of middle class flight, the findings were inconclusive. Only a majority (61%) of suburbanites and white (58%) and 0-5 (54%) and 11-15 year employees (63%) thought it would not decrease middle class flight.

On the other hand, 55% and 63% felt it would not increase residential and school integration, respectively. Blacks and Latinos living in the city were divided on residential integration. And 60% of latinos thought it would enhance school integration. But the majority (74%) decidedly disagreed that the residency policy would improve the quality of the teaching staff. The findings were inconclusive on whether the economic/social quality of the city would be improved (46% to 40%). The majority responses were divided along racial lines (54% whites no, 62% blacks and 60% latinos yes), by position (50% teachers yes, 58% administrators no), place of residence (55% city dwellers yes, and 55% suburbanites no).

The sample appeared to be split (47% to 45%) on its effect on teacher/administrator understanding of the community. Only blacks and latinos living in the city and whites in the suburbs significantly disagreed, yes and no respectively.

Forty-five percent as compared to 36% felt city residency would encourage support of tax levies. Again a higher percentage of city blacks (60%) than suburban whites (48%) agreed with the majority. Also 49% of teachers stated yes and 54% of administrators gave a negative response. Fifty-one percent of city residents stated yes, 47% suburbanites no.

But the majority (48%) did not think mandated residency would increase their participation in the community and 63% would not live in the community in which they teach. However, city blacks and latinos believed it would facilitate teacher/community interaction.

Although 75% of the total sample felt residency restricted their freedom of residential mobility, and 64% believed it was a political decision to control taxpayers and voters, they were undecided as to whether it violated their constitutional rights (43% yes, 36% no). While the majority of city dwellers and blacks agreed with suburbanites and whites and latinos on the first two issues (freedom of movement and political manipulation), they disagreed on the constitutionality of city residency. The difference in opinions may be the result of the lack of understanding of the Equal Protection Clause.

The majority reaction against manditory residency is reflected in their response to the importance of the city's interest in relation to the indi-

vidual's rights. Sixty-three percent opted for individual rights over city interest.

On the other hand, the majority (51% as opposed to 32%) appear to rate their school high enough to send their own children to the school. (52% of the sample had school-age children.) It indicates a rather high satisfaction with Chicago schools.

Disenchantment with the residency ruling is seen in their reluctance to move into the city if required. Forty-six percent said they would not and 24% would. The less than majority response was influenced by the variable of race in which 64% of whites, 80% of latinos and only 31% of blacks would not move to the city. Similarly, 75% of suburbanites and only 33% of city dwellers, and only 24% of 16-25 year Board employees would refuse to relocate to Chicago.

When it came to resigning their Board of Education position if they were mandated to move into the city, the responses were more conservative--33% yes, 31% no, and 33% don't know. Again the factors of race, place of residence and job tenure affected the findings, 44% of whites and 80% of latinos and only 23% of blacks would quit the Board. While 68% of suburbanites and 44% of 0-5 year employees would resign, only 18% of city dwellers would do so.

Probably the discrepancy in responses to refusing to move into the city (46%) to those willing to sacrifice their jobs (33%) is influenced by two factors. 1) the Board employees living in the suburb and those planning to move outside the city may be able to manipulate or get around the policy by maintaining psuedo-residency or obtaining an address of relatives or mailing address of a friend, etc. in the city.

They also may be able to negotiate their place of residence based on undue hardships and extraneous circumstances. (There is an appeal process for exceptional cases in the Board's residency policy.) And 2) moving and quiting the Board are not comparable actions and requires different levels of economic commitments to ones' principles.

The finding of this study indicate that residency rulings are not popular with educators. The tight job market, high interest rates and inflation had a significant influence on the samples' responses. Job security was also a factor for older employees. It appears that blacks favored residency and disagreed with whites and latinos on many of the issues because of their lack of residential mobility and job opportunities as compared to whites and latinos. In the long run it may be a discriminatory policy against minorities.

The results do not appear to answer the criteria/rationale for residency rulings. There is little evidence it would keep city revenue in the city, improve community commitment and understanding by educators, help middle class families in the city or enhance the social/cultural city environment. In fact it may have the opposite results by restricting the pool of qualified educators and hence affecting the quality of education in metropolitan schools. Political coercion under the guise of city residency is not the way to revitalize the city or its schools.

The issue of city residency for urban educators will probably not go away, although it has been ruled unconstitutional in a number of states.

Both sides of the issue must be given due consideration by policy and law makers. Underlying these considerations are the basic issues of civil rights, consent of the governed and the stability and quality of the city public school. Since a high quality school system is essential to the welfare of the city, it is even more reason that other means need to be found to bring people and revenue back into the city, rather than relying on public employees to save the city and its schools.

Table I

OPINIONS OF RESIDENCY RULING

N = 188

(Responses in percentage)

QUESTIONS	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Do you favor city residency requirement for Chicago Board of Education employees?	40	54	4
2. Should all Board of Education employees be forced to reside in the city?	31	65	4
3. Should only school employees hired after Sept. 1, 1980 be forced to reside in the city?	32	57	10
4. Should school employees living outside the city be exempted from the residency requirement?	53	34	7
Do you think the Chicago residency ruling for school employees would:			
5. Reduce white flight?	30	53	17
6. Reduce middle class flight?	36	46	17
7. Increase residential integration?	30	55	13
8. Increase school integration?	26	63	10
9. Improve the quality of the teaching staff?	11	74	14
10. Improve the economic/social quality of the city?	46	40	14
11. Increase teacher/administrator understanding of the school's community?	47	45	8
12. Encourage school employees to support school tax levies?	45	36	17
13. Increase your participation in your school's community activities?	38	48	12
14. Motivate you to live in the community in which you teach?	23	63	11
Do you think the Chicago residency ruling for Chicago Board of Education employees:			

		Yes	No	Don't Know
15.	Is a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution?	43	36	20
16.	Will restrict your freedom to live where you wish?	75	23	1
17.	Is a political ploy by the city to keep voters and tax payers in Chicago?	64	17	17
18.	Would you send your child to school in-which you teach?	51	32	15
19.	Do you think the city's interest in the residency ruling is more important than the individual's right to live where he or she wishes?	21	63	12
20.	If you lived in a suburb would you move into the city if the residency ruling were instituted?	25	46	26
21.	Would you quit the Chicago Board of Education if the residency ruling were instituted and you lived in, or were moving to a suburb?	33	31	33